

DEAR LITTLE AMBER.

At the sound of a football in the corridor he laid down his pen and leaned wearily back in his big arm-chair.

Presently a hand thrust back the curtain from the doorway and his wife entered. She was gowned for the evening in her favorite color—dull yellow. There were diamonds at her throat and in her gold-brown hair. She looked radiant with pleasure.

"Shall I do?" she asked, coming forward and leaning upon the desk with her hands, palms downward.

He inspected her deliberately—critically, she thought.

"You will do very well," he said at last. "What is it to-night, Amber?"

"Faust," I am going with the Kendalls, Lawrence—

He took up his pen with a slight gesture of impatience that effectually silenced her. Half the joy died out of her face. She stood a moment watching him as he wrote; then she went round and laid her hand timidly on his shoulder.

"John—" wistfully.

"Well?"

She hesitated, hoping he would look up or say something more; but he did neither.

"I—I am going now. Good-by."

"Good-by."

It was the tone, not the words, that brought a sudden dimness into her eyes. She lingered still with her hand on his shoulder. Then she slowly removed it and stole out of the room.

As the curtain ceased swaying behind her the pen dropped and John Sarles covered his face with his hands. He heard a carriage stop at the curbing and the front door close with a bang. He heard a man's voice and a man's gay laugh—both Lawrence Kendall's; then there was a rumble of wheels and he lifted his head with a jerk. Something like a sob escaped him.

"Lawrence," she had said. It had come to that, then! Lawrence! John Sarles knew him well—knew how his handsome face and winning smile endeared him to the hearts of women—how he was sought after, petted, admired.

Ah, well, it was something, after all, to be born with a handsome face and straight, strong limbs. John Sarles looked bitterly at the crutch leaning against the chair and thought that because of it life had withheld much of its sweetness for him. Wealth and even a powerful intellect which put him in touch with the brightest thinkers of the day failed to make up to him for that.

He had been on the point of sinking into the self-imposed isolation of a proud, morose nature when Amber came—Amber, the little daughter of his only intimate friend, who, dying, had entrusted her to his care.

Soon the music of her laughter had chased away the ghostly echoes from the lonely old house and the light of her happy eyes brightened every room. Her books strewed the tables, her flowers filled the long-unused vases, her gowns made bits of color against the dark walls as she flitted up stairs and down.

Gradually all became changed because of her. New furniture replaced the old, new carpets covered the floors,



PROPPED UP BY PILLOWS.

The conservatory blossomed with rare plants and a grand piano lit up a dark recess of the library with its polished ivory and rosewood.

By and by the little girl became a maiden to whom every door was open and whose smile was a favor which men considered as well-nigh precious, and all the time that Amber was growing winsome and sweet and graceful John Sarles was growing old and wrinkled and gray. But his heart was young as ever and he loved Amber with all the pent-up force of his nature and he suffered agonies because of that love, feeling that she could never, never be his.

One day a handsome boy of good family came to ask him for Amber's hand. John Sarles gave his consent and his blessing as well. What else could he do, not knowing but that Amber loved him? And while the boy was pleading his cause John sat in his study with as bitter a heartache as ever man had.

Presently the door opened, but he didn't look up. And then came a sweet sobbing voice and the pressure of two soft arms about his neck from behind.

"Oh, guardy, guardy, are you tired of me that you try to get rid of me so?"

He was suffocating with surprise and joy and terror, but he managed to draw her around where he could see her face, which was rosy with blushes and persistently averted.

"Amber!" he cried. "Tired of you? Want to get rid of you, Amber?"

And then, reassured by his tone, she burst out passionately:

"Yes, you must be, else you'd never have sent him to me, when you know I hate him—hate them all but you!"

He drew her down on his knee at that and held her close in his trem-

bling arms. His face was near hers, but he did not kiss her. He could only look at the sweet, wet eyes, and child-like mouth, the round, soft cheek, and gold-brown hair, wondering, doubting, hoping all at once—he could not have told which the most of the three.

That was two years ago—two blessed years of such happiness that they seemed to him like a long delightful dream. Amber loved him and Amber was his wife.

But of late a shadow had fallen between them—the shadow of Lawrence Kendall. The fear that had numbed John's heart when he first beheld the young man's admiring gaze upon his wife had ripened into fierce jealousy.

He had grown cold and austere in his manner, causing Amber many tears and much worry. Once he had been positively harsh toward her. What else had he been to-night? And all the time his proud, sensitive nature was suffering to its utmost capacity.

Dear little Amber! He could feel the tears in her eyes and the quiver of her mouth though he could not see them. The wistful pleading in her voice had touched him to the quick.

How he longed to snatch her in his arms—crumpling the dull yellow silk, if he must, and ruffling the shiny hair, for she used never to complain—and kiss her over and over and tell her how much he loved her, and how sorry he was to hurt her by word or look.

But no—his pride, his indomitable pride, restrained him, and he had let her go with her whole evening spoiled because of it.

Ah, just wait till she came in, tired and cold and sleepy! Then he would make it all right. She would forgive him—of course she would, the darling! And they would be happy again as they had not been for weeks, sitting by the fire together, she in the big crimson chair and he on an ottoman at her side, just where he could touch her hand or cheek and kiss her when he chose.

The firelight would dance on her hair and bring out the soft color in her face, and she would laugh and smile in the old joyous way. What a fool he had been—how cowardly and unreasonably, to doubt his innocent darling even for one moment.

It was 2 o'clock and Amber ought to have been home an hour ago. What was it made John start and tremble and pale as he glanced at the clock? Were his fears confirmed? Had his doubts become truths?

Hark! Was not that the sound of a carriage pausing at the curbing? What occasioned this unusual confusion in the hall below?

John Sarles seized his crutch and limped a few paces toward the door, but stopped as it was flung open and the figure of an old serving man appeared on the threshold.

"Master—" he began.

John Sarles' lips moved, but no sound passed them.

"Master, I have come with sad news for you. There has been an accident—the horses ran away—and Miss Amber—"

He caught John as he reeled and fell, and answering the mute, awful appeal of those agonized eyes, he concluded—"Is hurt seriously, but not fatally. The horse just brought her home."

Three months afterward, when bursting buds and freshly-sprouting grass proclaimed that spring was at hand, Amber was carried into her husband's study and propped up by pillows and cushions on the sofa there. Her face had lost its roundness and its dainty color and the beautiful brown-gold hair was cut close to her head.

There was a great bunch of yellow roses on the table at her side and she touched them lovingly, knowing that John was watching her and that he had placed them there.

Presently he came and sat down on the edge of the sofa—all their differences had long since been made up—and took her hands in his and held them tenderly against his mouth. There were tears in his eyes, though Amber's were clear enough.

"You dear old John," she said, smiling. "I believe you feel worse about it than I do."

He sobbed.

"Well, you needn't, you silly boy." She was silent a moment, and then she said, musingly: "Do you know, I believe I'm half glad—"

"Oh, my darling, to be lame all your life!"

"Yes, for don't you see, we shall sympathize with one another more than we ever have? And, oh, John—"

"Yes, Amber."

"I never realized before how patient and dear you were until I was hurt. I think I love you better than ever, if that can be, and I am sure—quite sure, that this has been a blessed lesson for both of us, aren't you?"

And John, in his newer and clearer wisdom, dared not deny it.

Hygienic Writing Paper.

Among the latest things in stationery is a writing paper which is specially manufactured for the prevention of the spreading by letters of various forms of infectious diseases. Everyone is aware that in receiving letters from disease-stricken places, at home or abroad, they run a certain amount of risk. This stationery is said to be rendered contagion-proof. The paper is so impregnated with antiseptics that all deleterious organisms adhering to it are rendered inert, even though a fever-stricken person write or touch the letter.

To Locate a Puncture.

The customary method of locating a bicycle puncture is to immerse the wheel in a tub of water, and wherever the bubbles show there will be a puncture. On occasions, however, the air pressure is not sufficient to create bubbles. In such cases smear some thin soap lather over the tire and a soap bubble will form over the puncture, no matter how small it is.

ACCOMMODATING.

B Landlord in Kansas Who Took the Medal for Being Obliging.

"I stopped at a very small town in Kansas a few weeks ago," said L. M. Martinez at the Raleigh. "I had been in the town once before, and knew where the hotel was. It was late at night when I got off the train and went to the hotel. After repeatedly knocking and shaking the door the landlord let me in. The next morning breakfast was not ready when I got up, but the landlord was in good humor about it, saying: 'Everybody is sick about the house. You are the only guest, so I didn't get breakfast ready.' He went I found that my customer was out of town, so had nothing to do but to stay around the hotel all day. The landlord got dinner and supper for me and I asked, 'Who is sick?'"

"My wife, two children, the cook, the waiter and the porter."

"I should think you would get some one else."

"Can't. They won't come."

"Why?"

"They are all afraid of the small-pox. I'm the only one who hasn't got it, and I feel the symptoms. I'll be in bed to-morrow, but I think the porter will be well enough to run the hotel by that time. He is sitting up today."

"I paid my bill very suddenly, and put myself under medical treatment when I reached the next town."—San Francisco Chronicle.

The Wandering Fish.

The Baltimore Sun prints the following: "A skeleton of a fish is prized very highly as a curiosity by Mr. Augustus Benoit of the little two-masted schooner Ernest Dacasta of Halifax, which arrived yesterday from the West Indies. 'That is,' said Mr. Benoit, while showing his prize, 'the skeleton of what is known as the wandering fish, and there are not half a dozen other specimens in the world. The name has been applied to it because so few have been captured. Its wonderful feature is that on the front of the skeleton there is a perfect outline of the scene on Cavalry, The Savior, with outstretched arms and with His head slightly inclined to the left shoulder, is plainly marked. Near the left side of the head is a clearly defined heart. Above the head of the figure the vertebrae forms a crown of thorns. Striking also,' continued Mr. Benoit, 'is the reverse side of the fish's skeleton. With arms extended, as if invoking benediction, the figure of a bishop is presented. The ornamentation of the vestments is delicately traced in the bone, the cross being represented by seams running up and down and across the back of the chasuble. The bishop is bareheaded, but his mitre is supplied by a part of the skeleton which is fitted over the head of the figure. Another bone makes the crozier. Holding the skeleton up to the light it appears transparent, with the human form outlined within it.' When the skeleton had been exposed, Mr. Benoit shook it, and from it came a bell-like sound. The fish is sixteen and one-half inches long."

New Style of Canvasers.

The up-to-date canvasser now travels in a bunch. Under the direction of managers and chaperons, companies of lady agents will soon be touring the country, judging from the advent of such an organization here. They hold rehearsals, just like their theatrical sisters, and each girl is thoroughly coached as to what to say and how to say it. Early in the morning they receive their assignments and scatter over the city or town, watched by spotters, who report to the manager any breach of contract on the part of the canvasser. The rules are of the early-to-bed-and-early-to-rise sort, the hotel bills and traveling expenses are paid by the manager, and the entire outfit is an object lesson of the benefit to be derived from discipline, drill and organization. The female book agent needn't be lonely and helpless any longer unless she proposes to flock by herself.—New York Letter.

WORTH KNOWING.

Two wealthy Hebrews of Bagdad now own all that remains of the ancient town of Babylon.

Three hundred thousand tons of vegetables, valued at \$25,000,000, were sold in the city of Paris in 1895.

Six couples living within a circuit of one mile at Milford, N. H., have celebrated their golden wedding anniversaries.

A floral bicycle was the funeral tribute recently made by a Lewiston (Me.) hot-house for bereaved cyclomaniac friends of a young man who had lived there.

A stranger in Manistich, Mich., recently engaged eighty men to work on the railroad. They were grateful, and bought him drinks for a week before they found out it was a trick.

Prairie schooners bound East are the spectacles to which Nebraskans around Arapahoe are treated now. The people are being forced away from the Southwestern country by drought.

Seaweed, though not the diet for an epicure, is, when dry, richer than oatmeal or Indian corn in nitrogenous constituents, and takes rank among the most nutritious of vegetable foods.

The Japanese are now getting used to glass. At first, glass in a railway carriage window had to be smeared with streaks of white paint to keep passengers from poking their heads through it.

Hessian graves at Bennington, Vt., were decorated recently by a 10-year-old girl whose family is summering there. It is said to be the first time that any flowers have been strewn over them.

SWAMPS OF ORINOCO.

VAST STRETCHES OF TERRITORY UNEXPLORED MAN.

Ferocity of the Reptiles and Birds—Alligators That Are Not Slow in Attacking Men—The Deadly Caribfish—Fall of Fierce Animals.



NOWHERE else have I ever seen the animal life so fully provided for offense and defense as in the Orinoco swamps, says the Alumni Journal of the New York College of Pharmacy. This statement applies to every class of the animal kingdom, but with special force to its smaller members. The tigers and tiger-cats, notwithstanding that they were frequent visitors to the camp, entering the tent and even during the last few nights of my stay the house itself, will endeavor to escape from man on most occasions, but the fleas, jiggers, golofas, goropatas and mosquitoes know neither fear nor rest in the region where we spent the most of our time.

Reference has already been made to the abundance of serpents as seen when they are disturbed by the inundation of their meadows. The forests are equally full of them. We would encounter them in the pathway; they climbed upon the trees and bushes, especially those overhanging the water; they were constant visitors to the camp, entering the tent or house, and then even lived in numbers in the palm leaf thatch. Nine coral snakes were removed in replacing the roof of the house next adjoining ours.

An erroneous idea exists as to the harmlessness of the alligator, and it is strange that this should have been largely promoted by writers on natural history. Not only are these creatures large and numerous about the delta, but they are very ferocious and, especially during the hatching season, they are not slow in attacking man. Even the smaller members of the lizard family are in some cases reported venomous and certainly do not lack the disposition to attack human beings, as we ascertained by personal observation. No one is, of course, surprised to find ferocity among the reptiles, but it does appear strange to see the birds, armed with sharp and powerful spikes upon the wings and even with horns upon the head. Although the latter may not be used for offense the former certainly are and constitute very formidable weapons. Birds of prey are exceedingly numerous in this region and have good reason for being well armed, for the objects of their attention are in many if not most cases fitted for making a desperate resistance.

Although these visible evidences of warfare are so conspicuous about the lower Orinoco, it is beyond the reach of our ordinary observation, within the various waters of this strange region, that the most desperate conflicts are waged. Surely nothing can exceed in interest the combination of provisions for rapid and changing movement and of offensive and defensive armament possessed by the animals of the streams and pools. The marbot, the principal food fish there found, has a pair of otusks like those of the wild boar, some two inches in length, sharp and powerful, and these are supplemented by a set of powerful molars for heavy grinding. The "scissors fish" has a cutting under edge to its pectoral fin, which closes down by a succession of notches, each holding the cutter at the point reached by each successive muscular contraction. The waters swarm with electric eels, though these are not nearly so dangerous as are generally believed. The caribfish, or piranha, with interlocking triangular teeth, massive head and jaws and a ferocity which for vigor and persistence is equaled only by that of the bulldog in the entire animal kingdom, swarms in most of the pools and renders death practically certain to any one obliged to make his way by swimming for any considerable distance in a pool where they abound.

A Conscientious Grace.

In "The Hutchinson Family," which has just been published, Mr. John W. Hutchinson tells this story of the Rev. Humphrey Moore, years ago minister at Milford, N. H.: "On one occasion he was asked to officiate at a Masonic celebration where a prayer was considered germane to the proceedings. All his denomination were opposed to the mystic order, and at first he hesitated, but finally complied, and at the appointed time and place made his appearance and offered the following prayer: 'Oh, Lord, we pray for we know not what; if it is good, bless it; if it is bad, curse it. World without end. Amen.'"

For Feather Beds.

An unusual way of treating a feather bed is as follows: Place it upon a piazza roof, if one is at hand, or, if not, upon several boards, so as to raise it from the ground. Leave it exposed to the drenching rain until it is thoroughly soaked, then turn the bed several times. Dry it in the sun, turning first one side and then the other. When one side is perfectly dry, beat it up with sticks until perfectly light, and so on, until the bed is in perfect condition.

An Old-Fashioned Bed.

A lady remarks that, old-fashioned though it may sound, there is no better bed for a baby than a bag of clean oat chaff laid in the bassinette, which should be emptied, aired and refilled once a month. This, she says, is cheap and clean and sweet.

The Bicycle Fad.

The bicycle girl is all in a whirl As she rides o'er the roads in the park. And the bicycle man, With a suit spick and span, Is with her from daylight till dark.

The reason this fad, Which we've certainly had, Has been able so quickly to rise, Is because the bicycle makers Believe in newspapers, And in the good ones advertise.

Excited His Admiration.

Boy—Any hickory nuts in these woods?

Farmer—Yes, lots of 'em, and I've got a dog that eat a calf yesterday.

Boy—All right; then I guess he won't be hungry to-day. Don't let anybody know how you scared me.

Farmer (after being left alone)—By gum! I wish I was startin' in life agin and had that boy's chance!—Cleveland Leader.

Almost Betrayed Himself.

Johnny—Pa, gimme a quarter to go to the Basher Bazooks.

Pa—No, my son, you mustn't go there this week. The show ain't fit to be seen.

Johnny—How do you know?

Pa—Ain't I been there every ni—I mean a friend of mine told me so.—Cleveland Leader.

Definition.



Miss Scorchor Darkly—How is do whitewashin' industry, Misto' Kal?

Kal Somine—Oney middlin', Miss. Some days I does nothin', and some days I does twice as much agin.

The Proper Attitude.

"There's just one thing about this financial question," said the confident young man, "that I don't understand."

His father gazed at him and exclaimed:

"There's no use, my son, in your coming to me for information. If you've gotten that subject mastered to such a degree that there's only one thing about it that you don't understand, it ain't my place to say a word. The thing for me to do is to drag up a footstool, sit down on it, look up into your eyes and drink in wisdom."—Washington Star.

Definitions.

Question—What is a politician? Answer—A politician is a man who understands politics.

Q.—What is politics?

A.—Politics is the art of getting a \$700 man a \$3,000 job.

Q.—Is that all there is to politics?

A.—No.

Q.—What else?

A.—The man has to study out a way to get re-elected to his \$3,000 job without spending \$2,900 with the boys.—Chicago Journal.

He Invited It.

He—I fell in love with you the first time I ever saw you. What did you think of me?

She—I thought it was a pity you were so thin that you would never look well in knickerbockers.

Then he wandered out into the moonlight night and kicked six pickets off the fence.—Cleveland Leader.

Melancholy.

The melancholy days have come, And saddening are the sights That greet the eye, but the days are not A marker to the nights.

'Neath cotton sheet and counterpane You shivering cry: "When will Thou, O, thou hanger landlady, Put on that winter quilt?"

—Detroit Tribune.

Pleased the Boys.

The New Parson (in Arizona)—Mr. Roundup, may I ask if my discourse yesterday created a favorable impression?

Coyote Jake—Parson, I've heard more'n four dozen of the boys swear this mornin' it was the dandiest best sermon that wuz ever pulled off hyar!—Chicago Tribune.

Would Stay on the Safe Side.

Young Wife—I always thought you the bravest man in the world while we were courting. You wouldn't go to Canada in case of another war, would you, dear?

"Not if the war was with Canada."—Detroit Free Press.

Worked Like a Charm.

"Sawyer, I've cured my wife's insomnia."

"How did you do it?"

"Had the maid get up and ring the rising bell in the middle of the night."—Chicago Record.

Nobody Blames Her.

"Queer about that woman who sings in her sleep."

"I don't think so; she shows her sense in shirking the responsibility."—Chicago Record.

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GOOD WORDS FOR THE HORSE.

One Who Ought to Know Says Good Horses Are as Much in Demand as Ever.

From the St. Louis Republic.—Col. Ed Butler is authority for the statement that there are more horses in St. Louis now than there ever have been in the entire history of the city. According to his figures, there are anywhere from 20 to 30 per cent more now than there were during the palmiest days of the horse car or before the bike came into use. "I am better prepared to know how many horses there are in the city than any other man living here. The reason is that I catch them coming and going. I shoe them while they are living and haul them off when they are dead. I know that the average citizen believes that the advent of the trolley car and the bicycle dispensed with the use of horses almost entirely, but this is not the case. The bicycle dude and the trolley car patron never owned horses. The only horses the trolley car knocked out were the plugs that nobody else would care to own, and there were not half as many of them as is generally supposed. Good horses are as hard to get now as they ever were, and probably harder, for the reason that not so many of them are being bred. You can't hire a 'ig at a lively stable any cheaper now than you could ten years ago. The trolley car has killed the market for scrub horses, and they are cheaper, but a scrub horse is not cheap at any figure. I have been trying to get a first-class team for three years, and am willing to pay any kind of a price for them, but I have not been able to find what I want. I predict that within the next five years the breeding of good roadsters is going to become one of the most profitable businesses in the country."

TO KEEP A BOY AMUSED.

Puzzles and Games to Be Opened at Stations Along the Route.

Last week my sister was constrained to send her youngest son a long railway journey. She was greatly puzzled to know what to do to amuse the child during the weary hours of traveling, as he was too young to entertain himself by reading. Moreover, the boy was an irrepressible fidget, and an elderly relation had very kindly undertaken to take charge of the child, so that my sister was naturally anxious to provide him with some occupation with which to employ his mischievous little fingers and his busy little brain. This was her device—which I thought was so ingenious that I would record it for the benefit of such of our readers as are mothers and guardians of little boys about to travel back to school. She bought a number of little cheap puzzles, games, etc., and she fastened each little gift in a separate sealed parcel, and wrote outside the name of the station after leaving which it might be opened and played with. Then she acquired a Bradshaw's map of Europe and mounted it on linen, and drew the boy's journey in ink on the map, making an X at every station where he was to have one of the mysterious parcels. I am afraid in future that my nephew Bobby will now associate the chief towns in the north of Europe with the contents of that fascinating bag, and will ever remember Leipzig as the place where he obtained two fish and a magnet. Hand-over where he unwrapped a box of colored chalks and a picture book, and so on through all the major and minor towns along his route. The little parcels were so arranged that there was one for every three-quarters of an hour till 8 o'clock at night, and one for every half-hour between Queensboro and London the following morning.—Gentlewoman.

THE ELECTION OF JUDGES.

Ex-President Harrison's Objection to the Mode of Selection.

Ex-President Harrison writes of "The Judicial Department of the Government" in the Ladies' Home Journal, and says with reference to the general mode of selecting Judges in the majority of states: "There has been much discussion as to the proper tenure for the judicial office, and the tendency, as expressed in the later State constitutions, has been in favor of limited terms. The earlier state constitutions gave the appointment of the judges to the governor or the Legislature, but along with the demand for limited terms for the judges came another for their election by the people, and in a majority of the states they are now nominated in the party conventions and elected by popular vote, just as a Governor or Sheriff is chosen. I do not think that either of these changes is a reform. Limited terms, if they are long, may be supported by many considerations; but short terms, combined with popular elections, have not, in my opinion, secured as high a judicial standard as prevailed before. A judge who must go at short intervals before a political convention for a nomination, and before the people for an election, cannot have the same sense of independence and security that he would have if his term were long or during good behavior. The judicial office should